

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims: Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1. (Currently Amended) A method for the manufacture of an oligonucleotide conjugate comprising reacting, the reaction of

- (a) an oligonucleotide on a solid support having comprising a labile orthogonal protecting group that is bound to a terminal hydroxy group, and
- (b) a labeling compound,

wherein said labile orthogonal protecting group is at least partially substituted by said labeling compound in a nucleophilic substitution reaction.

Claim 2. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the labeling compound is a peptide, an enzyme, an optically active compound, a metal chelate, a dye, a linker moiety, a spacer moiety, a charged residue, an isotopically-enriched mass label, a protein, a silicone, biotin, a hydracid, a lipid, a steroid, a multinuclear aromatic or heteroaromatic system, a long-chain or branched-chain alkane, a dendrimer, or an alkoxy alkyl compound ~~selected from the group consisting of peptides, enzymes, optically active compounds, antigenic epitopes, radioactive compounds, metal chelates, dyes, linker moieties, spacer moieties, charged residues, isotopically enriched mass labels, peptides, proteins, silicones, biotin, hydracids, lipids, steroids, multinuclear aromatic or, as applicable, heteroaromatic systems such as naphthalenes, anthracenes, xanthenes, thioxanthenes, acridones and the correspondingly substituted derivatives thereof as well as dinitrophenols, azobenzenes, psoralenes, fluoresceins, acridines, thiazoles, cyanines, coumarins and the correspondingly substituted derivatives thereof. Other preferred labeling compounds that can be used are monofunctional, bifunctional or polyfunctional long chain or branched chain alkanes, dendrimers, alkoxyalkyl compounds and, in particular, polyethylene glycols.~~

Claim 3. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 2, wherein the labeling compound contains a reactive group which is ~~selected from the group consisting of~~ SH, OH, or and NRH.

Claim 4. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 3, wherein said NRH-group is part of a homocyclic, heterocyclic, homoaromatic, or heteroaromatic system, wherein R being is H,

alkyl, substituted or unsubstituted cycloalkyl, substituted or unsubstituted aryl, substituted or unsubstituted alkylaryl.

Claim 5. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein said labile protecting group is a carbonate ester, a thionocarbonate ester, an N-alkylimidylcarbonate ester, a dithiocarbonate ester, a thiocarbamate of nitrophenyl, a substituted nitrophenyl, pentahalogenphenyl, a tetrahalogenphenyl, a pyridyl, a substituted pyridyl, an N-alkyl-pyridinium-yl, an imidazolyl, an N-alkylimidazolyl, a triazolyl, a substituted triazolyl, or a tetrazolyl group selected from carbonate esters or thionocarbonate esters or N-alkylimidylcarbonate esters or dithiocarbonate esters or thiocarbamates of nitrophenyl, subst-nitrophenyl, pentahalogenphenyl, tetrahalogenphenyl, pyridyl, subst- pyridyl, N-alkyl-pyridinium-yl, imidazolyl, subst- imidazolyl, N-alkylimidazolyl, triazolyl, subst. triazolyl, tetrazolyl.

Claim 6. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the oligonucleotide and the resulting conjugate is bound to a solid phase at the 3'-end and the terminal hydroxyl group is the 5'-hydroxy group.

Claim 7. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the oligonucleotide and the resulting conjugate is bound to a solid phase at the 5'-end and the terminal hydroxyl group is the 3'-hydroxy group.

Claim 8. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the oligonucleotide conjugate is only partially deprotected by said nucleophilic reaction.

Claim 9. (New) The method according to claim 1, wherein the labeling compound is a naphthalene, an anthracene, a xanthone, a thioxanthone, an acridone, a dinitrophenol, an azobenzene, a psoralene, a fluorescein, an acridine, a thiazole, a cyanine, a coumarin or a substituted derivative thereof or a polyethylene glycol.